

MATE POACHING: WHO IS MOST LIKELY TO
POACHY AND WHY

By

JESSICA PARKER

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MATE POACHING: WHO IS MOST LIKELY TO
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Dissertation Approved:

Dr. James Grice

Dissertation Adviser

Dr. Melissa Burkley

Dr. Ed Burkley

Dr. Jennifer Byrd-Craven

Dr. Brandt Gardner

Dr. A. Gordon Emslie

Dean of the Graduate College

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"You can never cross the ocean until you have the courage to lose sight of the shore."

Christopher Columbus

"For your thoughtfulness and generosity, from you I have learned much of life's philosophy. Thank you sincerely."

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*“No matter how steep the mountain - the Lord is going to climb
it with you.”*

Helen Steiner Rice

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CHAPTER I

MATE POACHING: WHO IS MOST LIKELY TO POACH AND WHY?

While movies and romance novels show idealized depictions of a single man and a single woman falling in love and starting a relationship; it is likely that instead, a single woman is starting her relationship by luring an attached man away from his partner. In fact, an estimated 1 in 5 relationships start with one of the individuals already in a relationship with someone else (Schmitt & Buss, 2001). This is what psychologists often refer to as *mate poaching*—using tactics in an attempt to attract committed individuals away from their current partners.

Although mate poaching may be a relatively common occurrence, the topic has been largely neglected from the scientific community. Most research on infidelity focuses on the *cheater*, thus emphasizing reasons why some people in committed relationships actively pursue others outside the relationship (i.g., lack of commitment, marital dissatisfaction, personality characteristics; Johnson & Rusbult, 1989; Treas & Giesen, 2000; Whisman, Chatav, & Gordon, 2007). However, a recent study found that 85% of people report that someone else tried to attract them away from their partner (Schmitt & Buss, 2001). Similarly, findings from Study 1 of the present set of studies show that 88% of women reported that their friends' had pursued an attached guy. These statistics suggest that some individuals cheat not because they actively pursue other people, but because other people actively pursue them.

Overview of Current Research

The purpose of these two studies was to determine *who* is more likely to mate poach and *why*. Study 1 was designed to identify what types of women are more likely to engage in mate poaching. It was predicted that women who possess negative relational attitudes would be more likely to engage in mate poaching behaviors. A second study was designed to investigate potential motives for mate poaching—self-esteem, appearance threats, and competition. Specifically, it was predicted that in an attempt to restore self-esteem, appearance-contingent women would be more likely to mate poach following a threat to their appearance self-esteem. Combined, these studies offer insight into the behavior of mate poaching.

Study 1

Overview

The purpose of Study 1 was to identify who is more likely to mate poach. First, this study examined two factors related to mate poaching: Sexual permissiveness and media exposure. Previous research has shown that exposure to certain television shows, such as *Sex and the City*, promote promiscuous behaviors, including early teen pregnancy, permissive sexual attitudes, and a greater contingency of self-worth based upon their appearance (Times Online, 2008; Chia, 2006; Strahan et al., 2008). Women exposed to female television characters that use their sexuality and physical appearance to obtain power and success may be more likely to exhibit permissive sexual attitudes and behaviors in relationships. This in turn could lead them to be more likely to mate poach. Previous research has shown that sexual permissiveness is related to people's tendency to cheat on their partner (Feldman & Cauffman, 1999; Wiederman & Hurd, 1999), so it seems likely that such attitudes may

influence mate poaching tendencies.

Second, Study 1 examined whether negative attitudes and behaviors associated with low quality relationships (i.e., appearance self-esteem and relationship contingency) are also associated with mate poaching (La Grecka & Mackey, 2007; Zeigler-Hill, 2006). It seems likely that women who are high in these destructive attitudes and behaviors are more likely to engage in other costly behaviors, such as mate poaching. Research examining personal characteristics and mate poaching frequency suggests that there are distinct characteristic profiles associated with mate poaching (Schmitt & Buss, 2001). Specifically, people who poach tend to be mean, unreliable, adulterous, and sexy.

As a result of these findings, Study 1 examined whether similar negative attitudes are also associated with mate poaching. Specifically, I examined negative relational attitudes that seem characteristic of a “mean” mate poacher. Research examining relational aggression and hypercompetitiveness suggests that people who are high in these measures engage in mean acts towards their romantic partner (e.g., flirting with others to make a partner jealous, threatening to break up with a partner if the partner does not comply; Linder, Crick, & Collins, 2002) and have a greater tendency to inflict pain on their partner (Ryckman, Thornton, Gold, & Burckle, 2002). Other research examining entitlement attitudes suggests that people who have high expectations that they should receive special treatment are vengeful to others (Finkel, 2005). Combined, these findings suggest that certain women are more likely to engage in behaviors that are not only destructive to their own relationships, but also to others’ relationships. Therefore, it was predicted that permissive women who frequently view sexually permissive and mate poaching behaviors of women in the media would be more likely to mate poach. Furthermore, women who possess negative relational

attitudes, and engage (or would engage) in negative behaviors, such as mate poaching tactics, should be more likely to engage in mate poaching behaviors.

Overview

Study 2

The purpose of Study 2 was to determine one underlying reason why women pursue attached men. First, based on the previous findings, I predicted women will be more likely to pursue an attached match rather than single match. Second, I proposed that in an attempt to restore self-esteem, appearance-contingent women who receive an appearance threat will be more willing to pursue an attached match rather than a single match, in comparison to appearance-contingent women who do not receive this same threat and to all appearance-noncontingent women.

The purpose of this study was to demonstrate that one way appearance-contingent women may restore self-esteem following an appearance threat is to pursue an attached man. If people who base self-esteem on external sources devalue their own relationships and have poor relationships with others, it seems likely that these people would also be more likely to devalue others' relationships. This may particularly be likely following a threat to a domain in which self-esteem is staked. One form of behavior that can validate self-worth, but is destructive to others and their relationships is mate poaching. It may be that women perceive the situation as a competition between them and the attached man's partner. If this is the case, then women who are focused on appearances and physical attractiveness should be more likely to mate poach following a threat to their appearance.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Mate Poaching

Mate poaching is defined as behavior that is initially intended to attract an individual who is currently in a committed relationship (Schmitt & Buss, 2001). Most mate poaching behaviors include premeditated attempts of an individual (*poacher*) to attract committed individuals (those who are *poached*) away from their current partner (*poachee*). Some researchers suggest that mate poaching can only occur if the poacher is aware that the target is in a committed relationship and if the relationship status is agreed upon by all parties (i.e., an exclusive relationship has been decided among the couple; Davies, Shackelford, & Hass, 2007). However, others suggest that some mate poaching behaviors can occur without conscious awareness (e.g., evolutionary perspective; Schmitt & Buss, 2001).

Mate poaching appears to be a relatively common practice and one that occurs across a wide range of cultures. For example, Schmitt (2004) found that across 10 different world regions, 57% of men and 35% of women indicated they had engaged in at least some attempt at mate poaching, suggesting that this behavior is a universal mating

practice. However, research also suggests that certain types of people are more likely to mate poach than others. Individuals who possess negative personality characteristics (e.g. unreliable, mean, and adulterous) are more likely to engage in mate poaching behavior; whereas, individuals who possess positive personality characteristics (e.g., agreeableness, conscientiousness) are less likely to engage in mate poaching behavior. Successful mate poachers also tend to describe themselves as adulterous and sexy, while committed individuals who are successfully poached describe themselves as erotophilic, mean, unloving, and neurotic. These findings are the first to show how personality, specifically the big five, is related to mate poaching. However, the individual difference factor that has received the most attention in the mate poaching literature is gender.

Gender differences in mate poaching. Several studies have investigated whether men or women are more likely to engage in mate poaching; however, the results have been inconclusive. In a survey conducted by Schmitt and Buss (2001), men were more likely to report that other men had frequently tried to poach their past partners for short-term sex, suggesting that men are more likely to poach. However, the same survey showed that men were more likely to report that women had successfully poached them away from both their current relationship and from past relationships. Similarly, women were more likely to report that their current relationship was a result of them poaching their partner away from a past relationship. These last two results suggest instead that women are more likely to poach.

A problem with the Schmitt and Buss (2001) survey is that it utilizes a correlational design that relies on participants' retrospective memory to measure mate poaching behaviors. Participants are simply asked to recall their own and others' instances of

pursuing committed individuals. However, a great deal of research shows that retrospective memory can be biased due to the availability heuristic (Jacoby & Whitehouse, 1989; Tversky & Kahneman, 1973). As a result, it is unclear whether men do poach more, or are just more likely than women to report poaching. Studies that do not rely on self-reporting would offer a stronger test of gender differences in mate poaching.

Research using experimental studies to examine gender differences in mate poaching suggests that women are more likely than men to engage in this behavior. First, women are more likely to rate men as desirable when they are depicted surrounded by other women, compared to being alone or surrounded by other men (Buss & Hill, 2008). Conversely, men rate women as less desirable when they are surrounded by other men, compared to being alone or surrounded by other women. Although this study did not directly examine mate poaching per se (i.e., the target was not described as being in a relationship with any of the surrounding individuals), it suggests that women may be more likely to copy the mate preferences of their peers and therefore, find attached men more attractive. Second, women report being more attracted to an attached man, but this effect is influenced by conception risk and ovulation cycle (Bressan & Stranieri, 2008). When conception risk was high, committed women were more attracted to single men. However, when conception risk was low, these women were more attracted to committed men. For single women, conception risk did not influence their preference for single or attached men. Therefore, this work suggests that women are more attracted to attached men, but only when they are in a relationship themselves and are not fertile. Although these experimental designs provide a stronger test of mate poaching tendencies, one issue is that these studies focused exclusively on attractiveness ratings rather than an interest in

actually pursuing a committed individual.

More recent experimental research addressed this issue by testing gender differences in people's willingness to pursue an attached target (Parker & Burkley, 2009). Single and committed men and women were shown a photograph and description of an attractive individual of the opposite sex who was either single or in a committed relationship. Participants then completed a questionnaire, measuring their willingness to pursue the target individual. The results showed that only single women were more willing to pursue a committed target rather than a single target. That is, single women were more interested in pursuing a man that was unavailable to them. Single men did not show this preference. This gender difference in pursuit, however, was not evident when the participants were in a committed relationship themselves. This suggests that single women will show a greater likelihood of mate poaching.

Although this most recent mate poaching study demonstrated, using an experimental design, that single women show a stronger preference for mate poaching, it is still unclear whether certain types of women prefer to pursue already attached men. Clearly not all women engage in mate poaching behaviors; therefore, the purpose of Study 1 was to identify what individual differences are associated with women's tendencies to mate poach. Specifically, this study focused on the impact of negative relational attitudes and behavior on the mate poaching tendencies of women.

In Study 1, women were asked to describe, "What, if anything, do you find appealing about a taken guy's status," and here are some of their responses:

There is something about wanting what you can't have. I think for a lot of girls you want to prove that you might be better than the other girl or you hope the guy might

like you more and want to pick you over the other girl.

I guess it would be the thrill of knowing you could be caught or the thrill that this guy is choosing you over his girlfriend/wife.

The game of convincing a guy that you are better than his relationship that he already has.

It's kind of an ego thing. I want to see if I have what it takes to draw the attention away from a girl who obviously must be worth the attention of a guy I am interested in.

It would make me feel superior to the wife.

Although there are probably several reasons for why women pursue attached men, a reoccurring theme throughout my mate poaching studies is competition among women. As described in the above responses, women seem to be focused on the challenging, thrilling aspects of mate poaching and view successes in this behavior as an ego boost. In our society, women are socialized to compete with each other to be the most attractive or sexy one in the room. If a woman is able to successfully lure a man away from his partner (i.e., a poacher's rival) using her physical appearance, this may suggest to her that she is better than the rival woman, and this could boost her self-esteem. Women's responses above, combined with findings from previous research on mate poaching, self-esteem, and appearance based self-esteem provide suggestive evidence that self-esteem, appearance, and competition may be motives for women's preference and willingness to pursue attached men.

Contingencies of Self-Worth

Over a century ago, William James (1890) stated that people tend to base their self-

worth in certain domains, and these domains are most influential to self-esteem. It was not until 2001, that researchers began to examine this idea, and found substantial evidence to support James' earlier observation. As a result, these researchers developed a model of self-esteem that emphasizes how important contingencies of self-worth are to self-esteem, cognition, affect, and behavior (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001). People can possess either external or internal contingencies of self-worth. While some individuals' self-worth is based on internal sources such as their virtue or their love of God, others base self-worth on external sources such as gaining others' approval, or their physical attractiveness (Crocker & Wolfe, 2004; Crocker, Sommers, & Luhtanen, 2002). People who base self-worth on external sources, such as appearance, are more likely to engage in behaviors that are costly to their physical health and to their relationships with others.

External contingencies of self-worth influence people to engage in behaviors that can lead to poor physical health, such as smoking (Camp, Klesges, & Relyea, 1993), increased consumption of alcohol (Faber, Khavari, & Douglass, 1980), tanning (Leary & Jones, 1993), and unsafe sex (Abraham, Sheeran, Spears, & Abrams, 1992). One study of freshman college students found that those who possessed external contingencies of self-worth were more likely to engage in problem behaviors, such as alcohol, drug use, and disordered eating (Crocker, 2002b; Crocker & Luhtanen, 2003; Crocker, Luhtanen, Cooper, & Bouvrette, 2003; Lawrence & Crocker, 2002). Also, basing self-worth on one's physical shape and size can lead to eating disorders (Geller, Johnston, & Madsen, 1997). Other research has shown how basing self-worth on external sources can lead to poor relationships with others.

In order to maintain, enhance, and protect external self-esteem, people sacrifice

having close, mutually caring relationships with others (Baumeister, Smart, & Boden, 1996; Heatherton & Vohs, 2000; Vohs & Heatherton, 2001). Moreover, people that base self-esteem on external sources tend to view others as competition and rivals, and for this reason, are more likely to engage in behaviors that establish their superiority to others (Park & Crocker, 2003; Taylor & Brown, 1988). People are more likely to pursue self-esteem at the cost of others and their relationships with others when self-esteem is based upon external sources; this is particularly the case after threats to the source of self-esteem.

Pursuit of Contingencies of Self-Worth

Pursuing self-esteem becomes particularly important to people following successes and failures within areas that self-esteem is staked. People experience negative affect and the desire to restore self-esteem especially following failure within a domain of contingency. How people respond when certain aspects of one's self-esteem (i.e., personality, test performance, and from romantic rivals) are threatened has been the focus of an abundance of research (Baumgardner, Kaufman, & Levy, 1989; Baumeister, Buhman, & Campbell, 2000; Baumeister, Smart, & Boden, 1996; Greenberg & Pyszczynski, 1986; Murray, Holmes, Griffin, Bellavia, & Rose, 2001; Park & Crocker, 2003; Sharpsteen, 1995). For example, people who base self-worth on academic success experience greater negative affect and greater reduction in state self-esteem than among those who do not (Crocker, Karpinski, Quinn, & Chase, 2003; Crocker, Sommers, & Luhtanen, 2002; Park & Crocker, 2008). While researchers have shown how people respond to threats within some domains of contingency, less attention has been given to the influence of threats within the appearance domain (Franzoi & Shields, 1984; Snell &

Papini, 1989; Thomas & Freeman, 1990).

The most recent research focused on this influence by examining social behavior following threats to the appearance domain of contingency (Park & Maner, 2009). Specifically, these researchers examined whether seeking social contact and support following self-threat depends upon levels of self-esteem and contingencies of self-worth. The study focused on the differential effects of self-threat on women who base self-esteem on appearances (*appearance-contingent*) and women who do not (*appearance-noncontingent*). This study demonstrated that people with appearance-contingent high self-esteem desired contact with close others following a threat to their appearance; whereas people with appearance-contingent low self-esteem avoided social contact following the same threat. These results suggest that following psychological threats, people engage in different behaviors depending upon the domain of contingency that has been threatened; however, little is known about the specific effects of appearance threats on women's mate poaching attitudes and behaviors.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

STUDY 1

Participants and Procedure

Participants were one hundred and seventy-four female undergraduate students from Oklahoma State University, with 45% of the sample identified as single and 55% identified as attached. The women ranged from 18 to 34 years of age ($M = 19.82$). Just over 50% were freshman students ($n = 89$), 19% were sophomores ($n = 33$), 15% were juniors ($n = 26$) and 14% were seniors ($n = 25$). A little over three-fourths of the sample identified themselves as Caucasian and almost one-fourth identified as an ethnic minority (4.6% African American, .6% Asian American, 5% Native American, 8% Other). Recruitment took place through an online research participation program and participants received partial course credit for completing the study materials online.

Measures

Media exposure questionnaire. Participants indicated how often they watched several shows known to depict sexually permissive women (i.e., *Sex and the City*, *Gossip Girl*, *One Tree Hill*, *Grey's Anatomy*, and *The Hills*; Appendix A).

Participants also indicated how often they read Hollywood-oriented magazines (i.e., In Touch, Life & Style, US Weekly). Responses were made on a 7-point unipolar scale ranging from 0 (*never*) to 6 (*always*).

Sexual attitudes scale. Next, participants completed the Brief Sexual Attitudes Scale (BSAS; Hendrick, Hendrick, & Reich, 2006; see Appendix B), which measures four independent sexual attitude types, but this study only focused on sexual permissiveness. Permissiveness is defined as engaging in more casual sexual behaviors. The permissiveness subscale consisted of 10 items (e.g., “Casual sex is acceptable”) and responses were made on a 7-point bipolar scale ranging from -3 (*strongly disagree*) to +3 (*strongly agree*). The items demonstrated good internal reliability ($\alpha = .91$) and items were combined into a composite score. Higher responses indicated stronger sexual permissive attitudes.

Relationship contingency scale. Next, participants completed a four-item questionnaire used to measure relationship contingency (Sanchez & Kwang, 2007; see Appendix C). An example item is “I feel worthwhile when I have a significant other.” Responses were made on a 7-point bipolar scale ranging from -3 (*strongly disagree*) to +3 (*strongly agree*). The items were combined into a single composite score ($\alpha = .68$), with higher scores indicating that a person derives self-worth from having romantic relationships.

Hypercompetitive attitude scale. Participants then completed the Hypercompetitiveness Attitude Scale (Ryckman, Hammer, Kaczor, & Gold, 1990; see Appendix D), which measures one’s need to compete and win at any cost as a means of maintaining or enhancing one’s self-worth (e.g., “Winning in competition makes me feel

more powerful as a person”). Responses to this 26-item questionnaire were made on a 7-point bipolar scale ranging from -3 (*strongly disagree*) to +3 (*strongly agree*). The items demonstrated good internal reliability ($\alpha = .80$) and were combined into a single score, with higher scores indicating more hypercompetitive attitudes and feelings.

Relational aggression scale. Next, participants completed a 10-item questionnaire that measured relational aggression (Goldstein, Chesir-Teran, & McFaul, 2008; see Appendix E). Participants in a committed relationship were instructed to answer the questions regarding their current relationship, whereas single participants were instructed to answer the questions regarding their most recent relationship. An example item is “I try to make my romantic partner jealous when I am mad at him.” Responses were made on a 7-point scale ranging from 0 (*never*) to 6 (*always*). The items demonstrated good internal reliability ($\alpha = .90$) and were combined into a single composite score, with higher scores indicating higher levels of relational aggression.

Entitlement attitudes scale. The 19-item Entitlement Attitudes Scale (Nakarni, 1994; see Appendix F) measures beliefs about what one has a right to expect and deserve. Responses were made on a 7-point bipolar scale ranging from -3 (*strongly disagree*) to 3 (*strongly agree*). Responses were averaged together to create a composite score ($\alpha = .64$). Higher scores indicate greater entitlement attitudes.

Rosenberg self-esteem scale for appearance. Next, participants completed the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965); however, the items were adjusted so that they referred to appearance rather than general self-esteem (e.g., “I look just as good as most other people”; see Appendix G). Therefore, these items served as a measure of trait appearance self-esteem. Responses were made on a 7-point bipolar scale ranging

from -3 (*strongly disagree*) to +3 (*strongly agree*). The items demonstrated good internal reliability ($\alpha = .79$) and were combined into a single composite score, with higher scores indicating higher self-esteem regarding one's physical appearance.

Relationship behaviors survey. After completing these questionnaires, participants provided information regarding their own romantic relationships and friendships. Six items comprised the relationship behavior survey, measuring how acceptable certain behaviors are within both participants' own relationships and others' relationships (e.g., "It is okay to flirt with a friend's boyfriend"; see Appendix H). Responses were assessed either on a 7-point bipolar scale ranging from -3 (*strongly disagree/extremely unimportant*) to +3 (*strongly agree/extremely important*) or a 7-point unipolar scale ranging from 0 (*never*) to 6 (*always*). The purpose of this survey was to examine whether participants' attitudes and behaviors in their personal relationships were related to mate poaching.

Mate poaching tactics survey. Participants then read four scenarios that described several mate poaching tactics—ways in which a woman who is interested in a taken guy could attract, pursue, and obtain him (see Appendix I). Following the first scenario, 10 questions were presented; five questions measured participants' likelihood of engaging in the mate poaching tactic and five questions measured participants' frequency of engaging in the tactic. Therefore, the first scenario assessed participants' own mate poaching behaviors, by measuring if participants *would* or *had* engaged in the mate poaching tactics.

The following three scenarios described mate poaching in similar ways to scenario 1. However, following these scenarios, women were asked how often they believed *other*

women engage in the mate poaching tactics and how appropriate these behaviors are. Therefore, these scenarios assessed participants' attitudes of *others'* engagement in the same mate poaching tactics. Responses for how often other women engaged in the behavior were assessed on a 7-point unipolar scale ranging from 0 (*never*) to 6 (*always*) and responses for behavior appropriateness were assessed on a 7-point bipolar scale ranging from -3 (*extremely inappropriate*) to +3 (*extremely appropriate*).

Mate poaching survey. Finally, participants responded to seven questions that assessed their acceptance of various mate poaching behaviors (see Appendix J). Because these questions required participants to describe and explain their personal attitudes and experiences related to mate poaching, (e.g., “Are there circumstances in which you think pursuing a guy that is in a relationship is justified”), this survey provided a more detailed measure of the mate poaching tendencies of women. This survey was also used as a qualitative approach to understanding the personal mate poaching experiences of women. One item on the mate poaching survey asked participants to indicate whether or not they had ever pursued an attached guy. Responses to this question were used to predict mate poaching.

Study 2

Participants and Design

At the beginning of each semester, undergraduate psychology students took part in a prescreening session for an online research participation program. As part of the prescreener, students completed both the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), and the appearance subscale of the Contingencies of Self-Worth Scale (Crocker, Luhtanen, Cooper, & Bouvrette, 2003). Responses to these two measures were first used to identify women with moderate to high self-esteem, as indicated by a self-esteem score

above "0." With this sample of women with moderate to high self-esteem, I then identified appearance-contingent women (i.e., above the contingency of self-worth mean) and appearance-noncontingent women (i.e., below the contingency of self-worth mean). These women were recruited for the study.

A total of 131 female undergraduate women (68 single women and 57 attached women; 76 appearance-contingent and 49 appearance-noncontingent) from Oklahoma State University participated in the study for partial course credit. The participants ranged from 18 to 38 years of age ($M = 19.33$). Just under 50% were freshman students ($n = 57$), 29.6% were sophomores ($n = 37$), 13.6% were juniors ($n = 17$) and 11.2% were seniors ($n = 14$). Over three-fourths of the sample identified themselves as Caucasian (80.8%) and almost one-fourth identified as an ethnic minority (5.6% Native American, 5.6% African American, 3.2% Hispanic, 2.4% Asian American, 2.4% Other).

The study utilized a 2 (contingency of self-worth: appearance-contingent vs. appearance-noncontingent) \times 2 (appearance feedback: no threat vs. threat) \times 2 (relationship status of match: single vs. attached) between-subjects factorial design. Thus, appearance-contingent and appearance-noncontingent participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions: *No threat/single* ($n = 24$), *no threat/attached* ($n = 31$), *threat/single* ($n = 37$), *threat/attached* ($n = 33$). The dependent variables included an overall willingness to pursue questionnaire, and two modified versions of this scale that measured participants' propensity to pursue the match for a short-term sexual relationship as compared to a long-term exclusive relationship (see Table 7 for intercorrelations).

Procedure

Appearance-contingent and appearance-noncontingent women were recruited

separately via email, and were led to believe that they had been selected to participate in a test of a new online dating service. The email contained a brief description of the study and a link to the study's website. In the recruitment email, a researcher asked women to visit the study's website to learn more about the purpose and procedures. On the website, the details of the study read as follows:

This project examines appearance and characteristics of online dating. This study is completed in two separate sessions. During both sessions, you will be asked to answer several questions and provide information about your dating preferences and your attitudes toward attraction and dating. Also, we will take an individual photograph of you during the first session. The information and photograph you provide in session one will be used to test a dating service.

Participants then signed up for both study sessions.

Session 1. Participants arrived to the lab, and after reading and signing an informed consent sheet were seated at an individual computer cubicle running MediaLab software. Participants began the study by reading the following study information:

A new online dating-match service (similar to match.com or eharmony.com) contacted our research laboratory and asked us to participate in a nationwide study that tests their new match system. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to test the match service.

Today, you will provide us with information about yourself and this information will be sent to the dating service. The dating service will then use this information anonymously in their database to find your best match. The purpose of this study is to help test a new online dating match service and the information you provide will be sent to the service's online dating database to find your best match.

Participants then completed a demographics questionnaire and a match.com survey, similar to the one used in a previous study (Parker & Burkley, 2009). Next, participants were asked to provide descriptions of their physical appearance and their personal characteristics and traits (see Appendix K). After completing this last task, a researcher led participants to a separate room and individually photographed and debriefed each participant.

Session 2. Participants returned to the lab within one week to complete the study, and after arriving to the lab were seated at individual computers running MediaLab software. Participants were then informed that the main purpose of the second session was to assess their attitudes towards, and experiences with the new dating service. Immediately after beginning the study, participants were asked to wait a few minutes while the computer was redirected to the dating service's website. After the computer was directed to a fake dating website, participants read information regarding the dating service's mate process. Specifically, participants read the following:

The online dating program is used solely for research purposes only. So, the database that was used to find your match includes anyone that agreed to participate and is not limited to single individuals or limited to any other demographic (i.e., age, ethnicity, etc.). The dating service only matches people in the database based on personality; therefore, the person chosen as your match has a personality most compatible with your own. Also, while the dating service was in the process of finding your best match, other people in the database rated how attractive you were on a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being the most attractive). You will be told how all of these potential matches rated you on attractiveness level when presented with your actual match.

This cover story was used so that the presentation of the manipulation variables (i.e., relationship status of match and appearance rating) appeared more realistic. For relationship status of match, the cover story provided an explanation for participants that may wonder why they were matched with an already attached guy. For appearance feedback, the cover story was used to manipulate appearance threat, which led participants to believe that the appearance feedback they received was the overall attractiveness score that potential matches had rated their photograph (taken in session 2).

After reading the cover story, participants were presented with their match. All participants received the same match (i.e., photograph), and read the same match description; however, the match's relationship status and the participants' fake attractiveness rating differed by condition. Women assigned to the *no threat/single* condition received an overall attractiveness rating of a "7-quite attractive," and were presented with a single match; whereas women assigned to the *no threat/attached* condition received the same attractiveness rating, but were presented with an attached match. Women assigned to the *threat/single* condition received an overall attractiveness rating of a "3-not attractive," and were presented with a single match; whereas women assigned to the *threat/attached* condition received the same attractiveness rating, but were presented with an attached match.

Immediately after viewing the match, participants completed the State Self-Esteem Scale, willingness to pursue questionnaires, and a in a mate poaching survey. After completing these measures, participants were thoroughly debriefed in a face-to-face session regarding the purpose and nature of the study, and were then released from the study.

Measures

Rosenberg self-esteem scale. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE; Rosenberg, 1965, see Appendix L) is a widely used measure of global trait self-esteem, describing the way one generally evaluated the entire self. The RSE includes 10 items (e.g., "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself"), and responses were made on a 7-point bipolar scale ranging from -3 (*strongly disagree*) to +3 (*strongly agree*). After reverse scoring the appropriate items, participants' individual scores were averaged together to create a composite score for global self-esteem. Higher scores indicate higher trait self-esteem. For the purpose of this study, the RSE was used to ensure that only women with higher self-esteem, as indicated by an average RSE score above "0," were recruited to participate.

Contingencies of self-worth scale. The five-item appearance based subscale of the Contingencies of Self-Worth Scale (CSW; Crocker, Luhtanen, Cooper, & Bouvrette, 2003, see Appendix M) was used to measure how likely participants' self-esteem is based upon appearance. Responses were made on a 7-point bipolar scale ranging from -3 (*strongly disagree*) to +3 (*strongly agree*). After reverse scoring the appropriate items, scores were averaged together to create a composite state self-esteem score. Higher scores indicate that self-worth is more likely to be based upon physical appearance.

State self-esteem scale. The six-item appearance subscale of the State Self-Esteem Scale (SSES, Heatherton & Polivy, 1991; see Appendix N) was used to assess momentary changes in appearance self-esteem. Example questions include "I feel satisfied with the way my body looks right now," and "I am pleased with my appearance right now." This measure was used to ensure that the appearance feedback manipulation

was an effective self-esteem threat. Responses were made on a 7-point scale ranging from 0 (*not at all*) to 6 (*very much so*), with higher scores indicating a temporary increase in appearance self-esteem ($\alpha = .95$). After reverse scoring the appropriate items, participants' scores on the individual items of the state self-esteem scale were averaged.

Willingness to pursue match-original. The Willingness to Pursue Questionnaire (WPQ) was first created and used in Study 1 as a measure of participants' willingness to pursue a target (see Appendix O). For this study, minor changes were made to the instructions so that participants were asked to respond to each item "as if this match was real."

The WPQ contains a total of 10 statements regarding participants' attentiveness and attraction toward the target and their propensity to pursue the target (e.g., "How likely would you initiate a conversation with this person"). Responses were assessed on a 7-point bipolar scale ranging from -3 (*very unlikely*) to +3 (*very likely*). The ten items demonstrated good internal reliability ($\alpha = .88$). The ratings were averaged in order to create a composite score of participants' willingness to pursue their match, with higher scores on this measure indicating an overall greater willingness to pursue the match.

For ease of distinction between the three dependent measures of willingness to pursue, the original WPQ with the incorporated changes is referred to in this study as the Willingness to Pursue Questionnaire-Original (WPQ-O).

Willingness to pursue match-short-term. The Willingness to Pursue-Short-Term Questionnaire was a modified version of the WPQ-O. This questionnaire measures participants' propensity and likelihood of pursuing their match for a short-term sexual relationship (see Appendix P). The WPQ-S contains a total of 7 statements (e.g., "How

compatible do you think you and your match would be in a short-term sexual relationship?"), measured on a 7-point bipolar scale ranging from -3 (*very unlikely*) to +3 (*very likely*). The seven items demonstrated good internal reliability ($\alpha = .86$). The ratings were averaged in order to create a composite score of participants' willingness to pursue their match for a short-term sexual relationship, with higher scores indicating a greater willingness to pursue the match for short-term purposes.

Willingness to pursue match-long-term. The Willingness to Pursue-Long-Term Questionnaire was a modified version of the WPQ-O. This questionnaire measures participants' propensity and likelihood of pursuing their match for a long-term exclusive relationship (see Appendix Q). The WPQ-L contains a total of 6 statements (e.g., "How likely would you show interest (i.e., make eye contact, smile) in this person in hopes of beginning/developing a new exclusive relationship?"), measured on a 7-point bipolar scale ranging from -3 (*very unlikely*) to +3 (*very likely*). The 6 items demonstrated good internal reliability ($\alpha = .91$). The ratings were averaged in order to create a composite score of participants' willingness to pursue their match for a long-term exclusive relationship, with higher scores indicating a greater willingness to pursue the match for long-term purposes.

Mate poaching survey. The mate poaching survey was used to identify women who had previously mate poached and those that had not. This survey was also used to measure women's attitudes towards their own mate poaching behavior and the mate poaching behaviors of others. The survey consisted of seven questions, assessing attitudes towards various mate poaching behaviors and tactics (see Appendix J). Because these questions required participants to describe and explain their personal attitudes and

experiences related to mate poaching, (e.g., “Are there circumstances in which you think pursuing a guy that is in a relationship is justified”), this survey provided a more detailed measure of the mate poaching tendencies of women. Responses to the individual items were used for exploratory analysis purposes.

Relationship status manipulation check. To determine if the participants had attended to the relationship status of their match, a manipulation check was presented as a single question in the mate poaching survey. This question asked participants to recall whether the match was single or in a relationship.

Manipulation check for appearance feedback ratings. A manipulation check for appearance feedback ratings was presented to participants as a single question in the mate poaching survey. The manipulation of appearance feedback rating was checked by asking participants to "indicate your overall attractiveness rating," (1 = 0, 2 = 3, 3 = 4, 4 = *neither*).

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Study 1

A series of separate logistic regression analyses were conducted to predict the probability that a woman was a mate poacher, using the measures and survey items as predictors. The outcome variable was whether or not participants had ever mate poached (1 = *yes*, $n = 43$; 0 = *no*, $n = 137$). All logistic regression models were used to estimate the factors influencing female mate poaching behavior.

Mate Poaching and Demographics

A logistic regression analysis was employed to predict the probability that women had mate poached using participants' ethnicity, religious affiliation, relationship status, age, year in college, and whether or not they belonged to a Greek organization (i.e., demographic variables) as predictors. A test of the full model versus an intercept only model was not statistically significant, $\chi^2(12, N = 186) = 13.70, p = .32$. Moreover, none of the variables were significant individual predictors of mate poaching.

Mate Poaching and Media Exposure

It was predicted that exposure to certain media types (i.e., promoting female sexuality and power) would predict mate poaching. A logistic regression analysis was employed to predict the probability that women had mate poached using participants' exposure to the television shows *One Tree Hill*, *Gossip Girl*, *Grey's Anatomy*, *The Hills*, and the magazine *US Weekly* as predictors (see Table 1). A test of the full model versus an intercept only model was not statistically significant, $\chi^2(5, N = 186) = .74, p = .98$. Moreover, none of the media exposure variables were significant individual predictors of mate poaching.

Mate Poaching and Negative Attitudes & Behavior

A logistic regression analysis was employed to predict the probability that women had mate poached using women's relational aggression, hypercompetitiveness, appearance self-esteem, sexual attitude, entitlement attitude, and relationship contingency scores as predictors (see Table 2). A test of the full model versus a constant only model was statistically significant, $\chi^2(6, N = 186) = 19.38, p = .004$. The model was able to correctly classify 97% of non-mate poachers and 22% of mate poachers, for an overall success rate of 79%.

The Wald criterion demonstrated that women's sexual permissiveness ($\beta = .74, p = .004$) and relationship contingency ($\beta = .37, p = .05$) made significant contributions to prediction. The odds ratio ($\text{Exp}(B) = 2.10$) for sexual permissiveness reveals that for every one point increase on the 7-point SAS-permissive scale there was a doubling of the odds that women mate poached. The odds ratio ($\text{Exp}(B) = 1.45$) for basing self-esteem on relationships reveals that for every one point increase on the 7-point relationship

contingency scale, women are one and a half more times likely to mate poach. Moreover, the remaining four variables were significant individual predictors of mate poaching.

Mate Poaching and Mate Poaching Tactics

“Would You” tactics. A logistic regression analysis was employed to predict the probability that women had mate poached using participants' likelihood of engaging in the 5 mate poaching tactics to attract a taken guy (see Table 3). A test of the full model versus a constant only model was statistically significant, $\chi^2(5, N = 186) = 14.69, p = .01$. The model was able to correctly classify 99% of non-mate poachers and 9% of mate poachers, for an overall success rate of 77%.

The Wald criterion demonstrated that women's likelihood of getting a taken guy's friends to like you ($\beta = .40, p = .18$) was a significant predictor of mate poaching. The odds ratio ($\text{Exp}(B) = 1.50$) for this tactic reveals that for every one point increase on the 7-point scale, women are one and a half more times likely to mate poach. The remaining four mate poaching tactics were not significant individual predictors of mate poaching.

“Have You” tactics. A logistic regression analysis was employed to predict the probability that women had mate poached using women's frequency of engaging in the five mate poaching tactics as predictors (see Table 4). A test of the full model versus a constant only model was statistically significant, $\chi^2(5, N = 186) = 45.11, p < .001$. The model was able to correctly classify 95% of non-mate poachers and 33% of mate poachers, for an overall success rate of 80%.

The Wald criterion demonstrated that the frequency which women acted sexy around a taken guy they were interested in ($\beta = .62, p = .001$) made a significant contribution to prediction. The odds ratio ($\text{Exp}(B) = 1.85$) for this tactic reveals that for

every one point increase on the 7-point scale, women are almost two times more likely to mate poach.

Frequency & appropriateness of mate poaching tactics. A logistic regression analysis was employed to predict the probability that a participant had mate poached using women's attitudes regarding the frequency and appropriateness of mate poaching tactics of other women as predictors (see Table 5). A test of the full versus a constant only model was statistically significant, $\chi^2(6, N = 186) = 29.69, p < .001$. The model was able to correctly classify 30% of mate poachers and 96% of non-mate poachers, for an overall success rate of 80%.

The Wald criterion demonstrated that how participants viewed the appropriateness of other women flirting with an attached guy ($\beta = .47, p = .03$) and how frequent participants believed other women mate poach by insisting on seeing an attached guy ($\beta = .84, p = .004$) made significant contributions to prediction. The odds ratio ($\text{Exp}(B) = 1.59$) for how appropriate it is for other women to flirt with an attached guy reveals that for every one point increase on the 7-point scale, women are slightly over one and a half times more likely to mate poach. The odds ratio ($\text{Exp}(B) = 2.31$) for how frequent participants believed *other* women insist on seeing an already attached guy reveals that for every one point increase 7-point scale, women are almost two and half times as more likely to mate poach.

Mate Poaching and Relationship Attitudes

A logistic regression analysis was employed to predict the probability that a participant had mate poached using participant's relationship status, whether or not a participant had been cheated on, whether or not participants would rather be a mistress or

a wife that gets cheated on, and their attitudes towards being attracted to an attached guy, flirting with a friend's boyfriend, kissing a guy before knowing his relationship status, importance of being in a relationship, and frequency of talking to friends about relationships (see Table 6). A test of the full versus a constant only model was statistically significant, $\chi^2(8, N = 186) = 42.81, p < .001$. The model was able to correctly classify 38% of mate poachers and 93% of non-mate poachers, for an overall success rate of 80%.

The Wald criterion demonstrated that several variables had significant partial effects. Agreeing that it is okay to be attracted to a taken guy ($\beta = .28, p = .03$), and to flirt with a friend's boyfriend ($\beta = .39, p = .03$) significantly predicted mate poaching. Furthermore, preference for being a mistress rather than a wife who is cheated on ($\beta = .90, p = .03$) also significantly predicted mate poaching, while women's relationship status was a marginally significant predictor, $\beta = .66, p = .12$. The odds ratio for the attraction predictor reveals that for every one point increase on the 7-point scale women are 1.3 times as likely to mate poach, while the odds ratio for the flirting predictor reveals that for every one point increase on the same scale women are 1.5 times as more likely to mate poach. The odds ratio ($\text{Exp}(B) = 2.45$) for mistress versus wife indicates that women who would rather be a mistress as compared to a wife who is cheated on is almost two and a half times more likely to be a mate poacher. The odds ratio ($\text{Exp}(B) = 1.94$) for relationship status indicates that single women are almost 2 times as likely to mate poach as compared to committed women.

Qualitative Data from Mate Poaching Survey

Descriptive statistics were examined for participants' personal attitudes and

experiences related to mate poaching. When asked to describe circumstances in which pursuing a guy in a relationship is justified, over half of women (62%) reported that there were no circumstances in which pursuing a guy is justified, however 37% of women described such circumstances. Women most frequently reported that it is okay to pursue a guy in a relationship if: 1) he is unhappy, 2) he is in a relationship or not married, 3) he is going to end his relationship with the other girl or is thinking about leaving her, or 4) he is “the one” or we are in love. When asked to describe what women found appealing about a guy’s taken status, the five most appealing aspects were: 1) I want what I can’t have (24%), 2) he knows how to be in a relationship and/or be committed (22%), 3) someone else found something interesting in him and/or he has something to be desired (15%), 4) it’s a challenge (13%), 5) the thrill of the chase (11%).

Study 2

Manipulation Checks

State self-esteem and appearance feedback. To evaluate whether the appearance feedback manipulation was an effective threat, independent sample t-tests were conducted separately for appearance-contingent and appearance-noncontingent participants' state self-esteem scores. Appearance-contingent women in the threat conditions ($M = .23$, $SD = 1.52$) reported lower state self-esteem scores than appearance-contingent women in the no threat conditions ($M = .85$, $SD = 1.04$), $t(74) = 2.01$, $p = .05$. Appearance-noncontingent women did not show this difference, $t(47) = 1.31$, $p = .20$.

Relationship status of match. Ninety-six percent of participants correctly remembered their match's relationship status. Data from the six participants that incorrectly identified the relationship status were removed from further analyses.

Appearance Feedback. While 90% (45/50) of women in the threat conditions correctly identified that their attractiveness rating was a “3-not attractive,” only 70% (47/67) of women in the no threat conditions correctly identified their attractiveness rating of a “7-quite attractive.” Interestingly, eight participants identified an attractiveness rating (“0” or “neither”) that was not included in the manipulation/study. Because such a high percentage of participants identified the incorrect attractiveness rating associated with the appearance feedback condition, I reexamined the wording of the manipulation check question. Due to the ambiguity in the wording of this question, I suspect that participants misperceived the real meaning of this question. It seems likely that participants rated how attractive they personally think they are, rather than indicating the overall attractiveness rating that they received in the study. Therefore, data from all participants were further considered in the analyses.

Primary Analyses

The key questions concerned whether women's willingness to pursue an already attached guy depends on an appearance contingency of self worth and appearance threats. It was predicted that appearance-contingent women who receive an appearance threat would be more willing to pursue the match overall, for a short-term relationship, and for a long-term relationship, than appearance-contingent women who do not receive this threat and all appearance-noncontingent women. Because these predictions were originally based on single women, and the study included both single and committed women, participants' dating status was included in the analyses.

Willingness to pursue match-original. A 2 (appearance feedback: no threat vs. threat) \times 2 (contingency of self-worth: appearance-contingent vs. appearance-

noncontingent) \times 2 (relationship status of match: single vs. attached) \times 2 (dating status of participant: single vs. attached) between-subjects factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted on participants' overall willingness to pursue the match (see Table 7). The only significant main effect was appearance feedback, $F(1, 109) = 19.79, p < .001, \eta^2 = .15$. In general, women in the no threat conditions ($M = .91, SD = .84$) were overall more willing to pursue the match than women in the threat conditions ($M = .04, SD = .97$).

Results also revealed a marginally significant Appearance Feedback \times Contingency of Self-Worth interaction, $F(1, 109) = 3.43, p = .07, \eta^2 = .03$, showing that the effects of the appearance threat were greater for appearance-contingent women than for appearance-noncontingent women. Specifically, appearance-contingent women in the no threat conditions ($M = 1.07, SD = .93$) were more willing than those in the threat conditions ($M = -.08, SD = 1.02$), to pursue the match. Appearance-noncontingent women did not show this difference. However, this interaction was qualified by a marginally significant three-way interaction with dating status of participants, $F(1, 109) = 3.30, p = .07, \eta^2 = .30$.

To reveal the pattern of data underlying the three-way interaction, simple main effects were analyzed separately for appearance-contingent and appearance-noncontingent participants. For appearance-contingent women (see top of Figure 1), there was a significant main effect of appearance feedback, $F(1, 72) = 26.16, p < .001, \eta^2 = .27$, such that women in the no threat conditions ($M = 1.09, SD = .82$) were overall more willing to pursue the match than women in the threat conditions ($M = -.03, SD = 1.05$). The Appearance Feedback \times Dating Status interaction was not significant, $F(1, 72) = 1.93, p = .17$.

For appearance-noncontingent women (see bottom of Figure 1), there also was a significant main effect of appearance feedback, $F(1, 45) = 3.99, p = .05, \eta^2 = .08$, such that women in the no threat conditions ($M = .63, SD = .80$) were overall more willing to pursue the match as compared to women in the threat conditions ($M = .15, SD = .84$). The Appearance Feedback \times Dating Status interaction was not significant, $F(1, 45) = 1.89, p = .28$.

Thus, appearance-contingent women were least willing to pursue the match overall after receiving the appearance threat as compared to those that did not receive the threat. Appearance-noncontingent women followed this same trend; however, these differences were marginally significant. Overall, women appear to be least willing to pursue a guy when they are (a) appearance-contingent, and (b) informed that they are *not* attractive.

Willingness to pursue match-short-term. A $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2$ ANOVA was conducted on participants' willingness to pursue the match for a short-term sexual relationship (see Table 8). The only significant main effect was appearance feedback, $F(1, 109) = 7.32, p = .01, \eta^2 = .06$, such that women in the no threat conditions ($M = -.24, SD = 1.22$) were more willing than women in the threat conditions ($M = -.92, SD = 1.14$), to pursue the match for a short-term relationship. While these differences between appearance feedback conditions are significant, it is important to note that in reference to the willingness to pursue questionnaire scale, the means indicate that women in the no threat conditions were somewhat neutral in their willingness to pursue, while women in the threat conditions were somewhat unlikely to pursue the match for a short-term sexual relationship. The results also revealed a marginally significant Relationship Status of Match \times Dating Status of Participant interaction, $F(1, 109) = 2.43, p = .12, \eta^2 = .02$.

Single women ($M = -.39$, $SD = 1.36$) were slightly more willing to pursue the match for a short-term relationship than committed women ($M = -1.03$, $SD = 1.00$). Again, in reference to the WPQ-S scale, this finding indicates that single women were somewhat neutral in their willingness to pursue, while committed women were somewhat unlikely to pursue. There were no significant differences in single and committed women's pursuit of the single match. The results also revealed a marginally significant Appearance Feedback \times Contingency of Self-Worth interaction, $F(1, 109) = 2.55$, $p = .11$, $\eta^2 = .02$. The pattern of data suggests that appearance-contingent women in the no threat conditions ($M = -.01$, $SD = 1.24$) were most willing to pursue the match for a short-term relationship, as indicated by a neutral response to pursuit, than appearance-contingent women in the threat conditions ($M = -.88$, $SD = 1.22$), and appearance-noncontingent women in both the no threat ($M = -.60$, $SD = 1.13$) and threat conditions ($M = -.98$, $SD = 1.01$), who were somewhat unlikely to pursue. However, these findings were qualified by a significant three-way interaction for dating status, appearance feedback, and contingency of self-worth, $F(1, 109) = 4.20$, $p = .04$, $\eta^2 = .04$.

To reveal the pattern of data underlying the three-way interaction, simple main effects were analyzed separately for appearance-contingent and appearance-noncontingent participants. For appearance-contingent women (see top of Figure 3), there was a significant main effect of appearance feedback, $F(1, 72) = 11.76$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2 = .14$, such that women in the no threat conditions ($M = -.01$, $SD = 1.24$) were most willing to pursue the match for a short-term relationship than women in the threat conditions ($M = -.88$, $SD = 1.22$). Again, it is important to note that in reference to the willingness to pursue questionnaire scale, the means for this main effect indicate that women in the no threat

conditions were neutral in their willingness to pursue, while women in the threat conditions were somewhat unlikely to pursue the match for a short-term sexual relationship. Importantly, this effect was qualified by a significant Appearance Feedback \times Dating Status interaction, $F(1, 72) = 3.88, p = .05, \eta^2 = .08$. Committed women in the no threat conditions ($M = .24, SD = 1.00$) were more willing to pursue the match for a short-term relationship than committed women in the threat conditions ($M = -1.32, SD = 1.12, F(1, 72) = 12.36, p = .001, \eta^2 = .15$). Single women in the threat ($M = -.67, SD = 1.25$), and no threat ($M = -.24, SD = 1.30$) conditions did not show these differences, $F(1, 72) = 1.30, p = .26$. For appearance-noncontingent women (see bottom of Figure 3), there were no significant findings.

Thus, appearance-contingent committed women were most likely to pursue the match after receiving the neutral appearance feedback as compared to the negative appearance threat; whereas appearance-contingent single women were equally likely to pursue the match for a short term relationship after receiving the neutral appearance feedback or the negative appearance threat. Appearance-noncontingent women did not show these differences. Overall, women were most willing to pursue the match for a short-term sexual relationship when they (a) are appearance-contingent, (b) in a relationship, and (c) are informed that they are quite attractive.

Willingness to pursue match-long-term. A $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2$ ANOVA was conducted on participants' willingness to pursue the match for a long-term exclusive relationship (see Table 9). The only significant main effect was appearance feedback, $F(1, 109) = 17.56, p < .001, \eta^2 = .14$, such that women in the no threat conditions ($M = .27, SD = 1.27$) were more willing to pursue the match for a long-term relationship than women in

the threat conditions ($M = -.87$, $SD = 1.25$). As expected, the results revealed a marginally significant Relationship Status of Match \times Dating Status of Participant interaction, $F(1, 109) = 2.72$, $p = .10$, $\eta^2 = .03$. Single women ($M = -.08$, $SD = 1.43$) were more willing to pursue the match for a long term relationship as compared to committed women ($M = -.66$, $SD = 1.35$). Again, it is important to note that these means indicate that single women were neutral in their propensity and willingness to pursue the match, while committed women were slightly unlikely to neutral in their propensity and willingness to pursue. There were no significant differences in single and committed women's pursuit of the single match. Results also showed a significant Appearance Feedback \times Contingency of Self-Worth interaction, $F(1, 109) = 9.39$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .08$. Appearance-contingent women in the no threat conditions ($M = .58$, $SD = 1.16$) were more willing to pursue the match for a long term relationship than appearance-contingent women in the threat conditions ($M = -1.00$, $SD = 1.32$), and appearance-noncontingent women in both the no threat ($M = -.22$, $SD = 1.31$) and threat conditions ($M = -.68$, $SD = 1.13$). Importantly, these findings were qualified by a significant three-way interaction for dating status of participant, appearance feedback, and contingency of self-worth, $F(1, 109) = 4.40$, $p = .04$, $\eta^2 = .04$.

To reveal the pattern of data underlying the three-way interaction, simple main effects were analyzed separately for appearance-contingent and appearance-noncontingent participants. For appearance-contingent women (see top of Figure 4), there was a significant main effect of appearance feedback, $F(1, 72) = 35.28$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .33$, such that women in the no threat conditions ($M = .58$, $SD = 1.16$) were more willing to pursue the match for a long-term relationship than women in the threat conditions ($M = -$

1.00, $SD = 1.32$). Importantly, this effect was qualified by a significant Appearance Feedback \times Dating Status interaction, $F(1, 72) = 5.74, p = .02, \eta^2 = .07$. For participants in the threat conditions, single women ($M = -.74, SD = 1.38$) were more willing than committed women ($M = -1.54, SD = 1.03$) to pursue the match for a long-term relationship, $F(1, 72) = 4.07, p = .05, \eta^2 = .05$; however, in reference to the willingness to pursue scale, these means indicate/demonstrate that single women were almost slightly unlikely to pursue the match for a long-term relationship, while committed women were almost quite unlikely to pursue the match. Single ($M = .29, SD = 1.39$) and committed ($M = .89, SD = .80$) participants in the no threat conditions did not show this difference, $F(1, 72) = 1.94, p = .17$. For appearance-noncontingent women (see bottom of Figure 4), there were no significant findings.

Thus, single, appearance-contingent women were most willing to pursue the match for a long-term relationship following the appearance threat as compared to committed, appearance-contingent women; however, single and committed appearance-contingent women did not show this difference following the neutral appearance feedback. Appearance-noncontingent women did not show this difference. Overall, women were least willing to pursue the match when they (a) are appearance-contingent, (b) in a relationship, and (c) are told that they are unattractive.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

Overview

For too long, research on infidelity has focused more on the behaviors and motives of the cheater, and meanwhile, neglected to consider the role of the pursuer. While mate poaching has commonly been depicted in movies (e.g., *Obsessed*) and television shows (e.g., *Sex and the City*), this form of behavior has now transcended to real-life relationships. With Tiger Woods' ten single mistresses and Senators John Ensign's and John Edwards' scandals with mistresses, who also happened to be single, there is little doubt that the study of infidelity is incomplete without the knowledge and understanding of a poacher's behavior. The current studies attempted to close this gap within the infidelity research, by identifying *who* is most likely to mate poach and *why*.

These two studies are unique because they offer novel insight into the motives and behaviors of the female mate poacher. In Study 1, I explored the question of who is most likely to mate poach by identifying a profile of a female mate poacher. Results suggest that she is most likely to be a single woman, who bases self-worth on having romantic relationships, and who would rather be "the mistress" as compared to "the wife being cheated on." She also possesses permissive sexual attitudes and other negative, relational attitudes. Furthermore, she is the woman who frequently engages in negative relational

behaviors, and who believes there is nothing wrong with engaging in mate poaching tactics. These results are the first to provide such a detailed description of a female mate poacher.

Study 2 attempted to explain an underlying mechanism for female mate poaching behaviors. It was predicted that an appearance threat would differentially affect appearance-contingent and appearance-noncontingent women's willingness to pursue an attached guy. Although my overall hypotheses were not supported, I argue that appearance contingency of self-worth and appearance threats may still be important underlying factors in female mate poaching, but issues with the study's prescreening and appearance threat procedures led to the lack of significant findings.

First, I argue that the stringent selection criteria for participating in this study led to a decrease in the participation pool resources; however, these participation requirements were needed in order to test the hypotheses. Furthermore, because of such specific participation requirements (i.e., moderate to high self-esteem, appearance-contingent, and appearance-noncontingent women); both single and committed women were recruited for the study. Recruiting both single *and* committed women refutes the robust findings from my first two studies that clearly demonstrate the important influence of women's dating status on their mate poaching behaviors. As a result, participants' dating status was added as a fourth variable in the analyses. Although including this variable seemed necessary, as a result of its' inclusion, sample sizes across the four conditions were drastically reduced. In some cases, sample sizes for the simple main effect analyses were as small as two to four; thus threatening the study's statistical power. This limitation should be considered in future studies by either (a) allowing enough time to obtain all and only

single women, or (b) expand the options for obtaining participants so that recruitment is not limited to one participant pool.

Why Do Women Pursue Unavailable Men?

Appearance, beauty, & competition. An idea that has promise in explaining the female mate poaching phenomenon relies on competition among women and the combined focus of society, men, and women's obsession with women's physical appearances and attractiveness. Research on female competition, combined with research focusing on physical appearances and societal gender expectations, and the contingency of self-worth literature provide substantial evidence for support of my main hypotheses. Taken together, these findings highlight a limitation of Study 2. I argue that this limitation is the major cause of the non-significant findings.

Central to my hypotheses was the focus on women's appearance contingency of self-worth and its' impact on women's attitudes and behaviors, specifically women's pursuit of an attached guy. An abundance of research has shown how important women's physical appearances and beauty are to men and to society (Brown, 1998; Simmons, 2002). These characteristics have also become the focus and concern for many women; and for some women, physical appearances become the basis for self-esteem. As a result, physical appearances and beauty are the most influential factor in competition among women, especially appearance-contingent women (Campbell, 2004; Joseph, 1985). But, how exactly do these women compete with other woman? In Study 3, I argued that one way appearance-contingent women compete is through mate poaching; however, these predictions were not supported by the procedures and findings. I still attest that the combined influence of physical appearances, self-esteem, and appearance self-threats

provides one major reason why some women mate poach.

When appearance-contingent women are confronted with situations in which they perceive another woman as being more attractive, it is likely that these women experience some level of jealousy towards the other woman; as a result, the other woman becomes a rival. When feelings of jealousy arise among women, any behavior that accompanies these feelings is typically directed towards a rival woman (Schutzwohl, 2008). Women who experience jealousy in this situation are most likely appearance-contingent women, and research has found that appearance-contingent women look outward for validation by engaging in behaviors that are unhealthy or self-destructive (Sanchez & Crocker, 2005). An unhealthy and self-destructive behavior that could validate women's appearance and self-worth, that is also directed towards a rival woman, is mate poaching. Taken together, this research suggests that the most influential and prominent form of competition among appearance-contingent women is the appearance of other women.

Based on this research, it seems surprising that my predictions were not fully supported; however, I argue that the lack of significant findings can be attributed to the form of appearance threat that was used in the study. Although the manipulation checks for appearance feedback showed a reduction in women's appearance state self-esteem among women in the threat conditions as compared to those in the no threat conditions, it may be that this form of appearance threat does not influence the mechanisms underlying women's mate poaching behaviors. Findings from Study 2 would suggest that the use of the attractiveness rating feedback is an effective way to reduce appearance state self-esteem; however, this form of threat may not represent the form of threat that would cause women to mate poach in the real world. Instead, the presence of another, more

attractive woman is likely to be the form of threatening appearance feedback that is most related to female mate poaching behaviors. Thus, this limitation should be addressed in future mate poaching studies by using a form of appearance threat that includes an attractive woman.

Low self-esteem. Some research on self-esteem provides suggesting evidence that people with high self-esteem may be more likely to engage in mate poaching behaviors. Not only are high self-esteem individuals more likely to use competition as a self-enhancement strategy (Schuetz & Tice, 1997), these individuals are also more likely to take risks and make decisions carelessly (Baumeister, Tice, & Hutton, 1989; Wolfe, Lennox, & Cutler, 1986). Taken together, these findings seem to support my original hypotheses and the procedures used in Study 2, which focused on women with higher self-esteem. On the other hand, research on competition among women and women's focus on appearance shows that women with low self-esteem are more likely to see other women as competition (Campbell, 2004; Joseph, 1985), and if mate poaching is viewed as a form of competition for some women, these women may be more likely to be women with low self-esteem, instead of high self-esteem. Although the current study did not address this, it may be that it is not appearance-contingent women with *high* self-esteem that engage in mate poaching behaviors; but instead, appearance-contingent women with *low* self-esteem that are more likely to mate poach. Study 3 only included women with moderate to high self-esteem; therefore, as a result of this limitation, future research should include low self-esteem women in a similar test of this study.

Desire for resources. It may be that single women are interested in committed men because such men are more likely to possess valuable resources. According to

evolutionary theory (Buss & Schmitt, 1993), women are motivated to gain and ensure resources from a partner, therefore women view committed men as more capable of providing these resources. Consistent with this notion, Schmitt and Shackelford (2003) demonstrated that men are more effective at attracting committed women away from their current partner when they demonstrate resource ability. An evolutionary approach could explain the results under the specific context that men demonstrate their resources. However, the current studies did not provide this demonstration which suggests that other variables are involved in single women pursuing committed men.

Other reasons. Other reasons why women mate poach may be that a taken man is seen as more of a challenge, or that the chase for a taken man's attention is more thrilling. Women may also see themselves as "saving" the man from an unhappy relationship, or it could just be that an attached man demonstrates his ability to commit and in some ways his qualities have already been "pre-screened" by another woman.

Limitations and Future Research

As with all research studies, the current study had limitations that should be addressed in future research. Because only one previous study has examined the effects of appearance threats on self-esteem, my hypotheses were primarily based on the findings from self-esteem research. However, because of the lack of research focusing on the effects of threats specific to the appearance contingency of self-worth, it is unknown whether the combination of these two variables is a unique influence to high or low self-esteem women. Future research should continue to explore the attitudes and behaviors of appearance contingent women, following different appearance threats.

Furthermore, because so little research has been conducted in this area, it is difficult

to explain why people mate poach without first knowing first *who* mate poaches.

Although findings from Study 2 suggest one reason why mate poaching occurs, the findings from Study 1 and past mate poaching studies (Parker & Burkley, 2009) provide substantial evidence as to who mate poaches. With this new information, future research should explore additional reasons for why people mate poach; however, researchers should only include female participants that fit the profile of a mate poacher.

Conclusions

Because mate poaching has become a common form of behavior in people's real-life relationships, this topic is becoming more controversial among both researchers and members of society. Most of the controversy surrounds the questions who is more likely to mate poach and why. The findings from the current studies provided an answer to each of these questions. Findings from Study 1 suggest that a female mate poacher is a single, sexually permissive woman, who not only possesses negative relational attitudes, but acts upon these attitudes by engaging in certain mate poaching tactics. She was also cheated on in a previous relationship, and she describes herself more as a mistress as compared to a wife being cheated on, and importantly, she derives self-worth from romantic relationships.

Although the predictions for Study 2 were not supported, a careful look at the research describing competition among women and women's focus on physical appearance, lends support for my main hypotheses. Taken together, findings from these two studies leave little doubt that single women are most likely to mate poach. Furthermore, Study 2 is the first study, to my knowledge, that attempts to answer the question of why single women would prefer and pursue a man that is unavailable. The

goal of these studies was two-fold. First, I attempted to close a gap within the infidelity literature, that for so long has neglected to consider the role of the *pursuer* in acts of infidelity. More importantly, my goal was to gain knowledge of the mate poacher, so that both men and women, single and committed, can become aware of this form of infidelity and the frequency in which this behavior occurs. Without any knowledge of mate poaching, an attached guy may not be so aware of the possibility that the single girl next door may be wanting to borrow more from him than just a cup of sugar.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Media Exposure Survey

Listed below are several statements that reflect your television viewing behavior. You will be asked to provide either your own response or you will be asked to indicate how frequent you engage in certain behaviors.

1. How often do you watch "One Tree Hill"?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Never	Rarely	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost Always	Always
2. Which character on "Sex and the City" most portrays a typical woman in society?
3. Which character on "Sex and the City" most portrays your idea of a powerful woman?
4. Which character on "Sex and the City" most portrays your idea of an ideal woman?
5. Which character on "Sex and the City" are you most similar to?
6. How often do you watch "Gossip Girl"?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Never	Rarely	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost Always	Always
7. How often do you watch "Grey's Anatomy"?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Never	Rarely	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost Always	Always
8. How often do you buy and read magazines, such as US Weekly, In Touch, Life & Style?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Never	Rarely	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost Always	Always
9. How often do you watch "The Hills"?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Never	Rarely	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost Always	Always
10. Think of your top favorite TV show.
11. On average, how many hours per week do you watch this TV show?

APPENDIX B

Sexual Attitudes Scale

Listed below are several statements that reflect different attitudes about relationships. For each statement, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with that statement. Some of the items refer to feelings of your own relationships or possible relationships, while others refer to general attitudes and beliefs about relationships.

1. I do not need to be committed to a person to have sex with him.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
strongly disagree	disagree quite a bit	somewhat disagree	neither	somewhat agree	agree quite a bit	strongly agree
2. Casual sex is acceptable.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
strongly disagree	disagree quite a bit	somewhat disagree	neither	somewhat agree	agree quite a bit	strongly agree
3. I would like to have sex with many partners.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
strongly disagree	disagree quite a bit	somewhat disagree	neither	somewhat agree	agree quite a bit	strongly agree
4. One-night stands are sometimes very enjoyable.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
strongly disagree	disagree quite a bit	somewhat disagree	neither	somewhat agree	agree quite a bit	strongly agree
5. It is okay to have ongoing sexual relationships with more than one person at a time.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
strongly disagree	disagree quite a bit	somewhat disagree	neither	somewhat agree	agree quite a bit	strongly agree
6. Sex as a simple exchange of favors is okay if both people agree to it.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
strongly disagree	disagree quite a bit	somewhat disagree	neither	somewhat agree	agree quite a bit	strongly agree
7. The best sex is with no strings attached.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
strongly disagree	disagree quite a bit	somewhat disagree	neither	somewhat agree	agree quite a bit	strongly agree
8. Life would have fewer problems if people could have sex more freely.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
strongly disagree	disagree quite a bit	somewhat disagree	neither	somewhat agree	agree quite a bit	strongly agree
9. It is possible to enjoy sex with a person and not like that person very much.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
strongly disagree	disagree quite a bit	somewhat disagree	neither	somewhat agree	agree quite a bit	strongly agree

10. It is okay for sex to be just good physical release.

-3
strongly
disagree

-2
disagree
quite a bit

-1
somewhat
disagree

0
neither

1
somewhat
agree

2
agree
quite a bit

3
strongly
agree

APPENDIX C

Relationship Contingency Scale

1. When I do not have a significant other, I feel badly about myself.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
strongly disagree	disagree quite a bit	somewhat disagree	neither	somewhat agree	agree quite a bit	strongly agree

2. I feel worthwhile when I have a significant other.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
strongly disagree	disagree quite a bit	somewhat disagree	neither	somewhat agree	agree quite a bit	strongly agree

3. When I have a significant other, my self-esteem increases.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
strongly disagree	disagree quite a bit	somewhat disagree	neither	somewhat agree	agree quite a bit	strongly agree

4. My self-esteem depends on whether or not I have a significant other.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
strongly disagree	disagree quite a bit	somewhat disagree	neither	somewhat agree	agree quite a bit	strongly agree

APPENDIX D

Hypercompetitive Scale

1. Winning in competition makes me feel more powerful as a person.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

2. I find myself being competitive even in situations which do not call for competition.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

3. I do not see my opponents in competition as my enemies.

3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

4. I compete with others even if they are not competing with me.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

5. Success in athletic competition does not make me feel superior to others.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

6. Winning in competition does not give me a greater sense of worth.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

7. When my competitors receive rewards for their accomplishments, I feel envy.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

8. I find myself turning a friendly game or activity into a serious contest or conflict.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

9. It's a dog-eat-dog world. If you don't get the better of others, they will surely get the better of you.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

10. I do not mind giving credit to someone for doing something that I could have done just as well or better.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

11. If I can disturb my opponent in some way in order to get the edge in competition, I will do so.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

12. I really feel down when I lose in athletic competition.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

13. Gaining praise from others is not an important reason why I enter competitive situations.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

14. I like the challenge of getting someone to like me who is already going with someone else

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

15. I do not view my relationships in competitive terms.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

16. It does not bother me to be passed by someone while I am driving on the roads.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

17. I can't stand to lose an argument.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

18. In school, I do not feel superior whenever I do better on tests than other students.
- | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Strongly Disagree | Disagree Quite a bit | Somewhat Disagree | Neither | Somewhat Agree | Agree Quite a bit | Strongly Agree |
19. I feel no need to get even with a person who criticizes or makes me look bad in front of others.
- | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Strongly Disagree | Disagree Quite a bit | Somewhat Disagree | Neither | Somewhat Agree | Agree Quite a bit | Strongly Agree |
20. Losing in competition has little effect on me.
- | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Strongly Disagree | Disagree Quite a bit | Somewhat Disagree | Neither | Somewhat Agree | Agree Quite a bit | Strongly Agree |
21. Failure or loss in competition makes me feel less worthy as a person.
- | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Strongly Disagree | Disagree Quite a bit | Somewhat Disagree | Neither | Somewhat Agree | Agree Quite a bit | Strongly Agree |
22. People who quit during competition are weak.
- | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Strongly Disagree | Disagree Quite a bit | Somewhat Disagree | Neither | Somewhat Agree | Agree Quite a bit | Strongly Agree |
23. Competition inspires me to excel.
- | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Strongly Disagree | Disagree Quite a bit | Somewhat Disagree | Neither | Somewhat Agree | Agree Quite a bit | Strongly Agree |
24. I do not try to win arguments with members of my family.
- | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Strongly Disagree | Disagree Quite a bit | Somewhat Disagree | Neither | Somewhat Agree | Agree Quite a bit | Strongly Agree |
25. I believe that you can be a nice guy and still win or be successful in competition.
- | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Strongly Disagree | Disagree Quite a bit | Somewhat Disagree | Neither | Somewhat Agree | Agree Quite a bit | Strongly Agree |
26. I do not find it difficult to be fully satisfied with my performance in a competitive situation.
- | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Strongly Disagree | Disagree Quite a bit | Somewhat Disagree | Neither | Somewhat Agree | Agree Quite a bit | Strongly Agree |

APPENDIX E

Relational Aggression Scale

Directions: This set of questions is designed to measure qualities of adult social interaction and close relationships. Please read each statement and indicate how true each is for you. If you are not currently in a romantic relationship, please answer these questions about your most recent romantic relationship. If you have never been in a romantic relationship, please leave these items blank (but answer all other items).

1. I have threatened to break up with my romantic partner in order to get him/her to do what I wanted.
2. I try to make my romantic partner jealous when I am mad at him/her.
3. I have cheated on my romantic partner because I was angry at him/her.
4. I give my romantic partner the silent treatment when s/he hurts my feelings in some way.
5. If my romantic partner makes me mad, I will flirt with another person in front of him/her.
6. I have hooked up with somebody else as a way of getting back at my romantic partner.
7. I won't look my romantic partner in the eye if I am mad at him/her.
8. I have talked about my romantic partner behind his/her back when I have been mad at him/her.
9. If my romantic partner makes me mad, I stop returning his/her calls for a while.
10. If I am mad at my romantic partner, I go out with my friends and don't invite him/her.

APPENDIX F

Entitlement Attitudes Scale

- | | | | | | | | | |
|----|--|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|---------|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. | I am more optimistic about other people's success than I am about my own. | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 2. | It is easy for people to take advantage of me without my realizing it. | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 3. | I feel indignant when someone infringes on my rights. | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 4. | When I don't get what I feel is rightfully mine, it makes me angry. | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 5. | When I ask people to do things for me I feel like I am imposing. | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 6. | I feel obliged to fulfill any demands made on me. | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 7. | I am easily intimidated by opinionated people. | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 8. | I don't have the courage to stand up for myself when someone infringes on my rights. | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 9. | I hesitate to assert my preference or opinions over someone else's. | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |

10. I insist upon getting my due.
- | | | | | | | |
|----------|-------------|----------|---------|----------|-------------|----------|
| -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Strongly | Disagree | Somewhat | Neither | Somewhat | Agree | Strongly |
| Disagree | Quite a bit | Disagree | | Agree | Quite a bit | Agree |
11. I expect other people to do special favors for me.
- | | | | | | | |
|----------|-------------|----------|---------|----------|-------------|----------|
| -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Strongly | Disagree | Somewhat | Neither | Somewhat | Agree | Strongly |
| Disagree | Quite a bit | Disagree | | Agree | Quite a bit | Agree |
12. Looking out for my own welfare is my main responsibility.
- | | | | | | | |
|----------|-------------|----------|---------|----------|-------------|----------|
| -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Strongly | Disagree | Somewhat | Neither | Somewhat | Agree | Strongly |
| Disagree | Quite a bit | Disagree | | Agree | Quite a bit | Agree |
13. I expect to have my own way.
- | | | | | | | |
|----------|-------------|----------|---------|----------|-------------|----------|
| -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Strongly | Disagree | Somewhat | Neither | Somewhat | Agree | Strongly |
| Disagree | Quite a bit | Disagree | | Agree | Quite a bit | Agree |
14. I hesitate to ask friends for support because I don't want to be a burden.
- | | | | | | | |
|----------|-------------|----------|---------|----------|-------------|----------|
| -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Strongly | Disagree | Somewhat | Neither | Somewhat | Agree | Strongly |
| Disagree | Quite a bit | Disagree | | Agree | Quite a bit | Agree |
15. I am genuinely surprised when I get rewarded for something I've done.
- | | | | | | | |
|----------|-------------|----------|---------|----------|-------------|----------|
| -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Strongly | Disagree | Somewhat | Neither | Somewhat | Agree | Strongly |
| Disagree | Quite a bit | Disagree | | Agree | Quite a bit | Agree |
16. I expect to be catered to.
- | | | | | | | |
|----------|-------------|----------|---------|----------|-------------|----------|
| -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Strongly | Disagree | Somewhat | Neither | Somewhat | Agree | Strongly |
| Disagree | Quite a bit | Disagree | | Agree | Quite a bit | Agree |
17. I continue an argument until I win.
- | | | | | | | |
|----------|-------------|----------|---------|----------|-------------|----------|
| -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Strongly | Disagree | Somewhat | Neither | Somewhat | Agree | Strongly |
| Disagree | Quite a bit | Disagree | | Agree | Quite a bit | Agree |
18. I can't seem to say "no" even when I really don't want to do something.
- | | | | | | | |
|----------|-------------|----------|---------|----------|-------------|----------|
| -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Strongly | Disagree | Somewhat | Neither | Somewhat | Agree | Strongly |
| Disagree | Quite a bit | Disagree | | Agree | Quite a bit | Agree |
19. I like to be fussed over.
- | | | | | | | |
|----------|-------------|----------|---------|----------|-------------|----------|
| -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Strongly | Disagree | Somewhat | Neither | Somewhat | Agree | Strongly |
| Disagree | Quite a bit | Disagree | | Agree | Quite a bit | Agree |

APPENDIX G

Adjusted Rosenberg Appearance Self-Esteem Scale

- | | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|--|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|---------|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. On the whole, I am satisfied with my appearance. | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| 2. At times, I think I do not look good at all. | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| 3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities regarding my appearance. | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| 4. I look just as good as most other people. | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| 5. I do not have much to be proud of when it comes to my looks/appearance. | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| 6. I feel unattractive at times. | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| 7. I feel that I'm an attractive person, at least on an equal plane with others. | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| 8. I wish I could be more attractive. | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| 9. All in all, I am inclined to feel unattractive. | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| 10. I take a positive attitude toward my looks. | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |

APPENDIX H

Survey of Relationship Behaviors

1. It is okay to be attracted to a guy that is in a relationship.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

2. It is okay to flirt with a friend's boyfriend.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

3. It is okay to kiss a guy before knowing his relationship status.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

4. How important is it for you to be in a relationship?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Extremely Unimportant	Quite Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Neither	Somewhat Important	Quite Important	Extremely Important

5. How frequently do you talk with your friends about your crushes/hookups/relationships?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Never	Rarely	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost Always	Always

6. Have you ever been cheated on?

APPENDIX I

Mate Poaching Tactic Survey

In this task, you will read a scenario. You will then be presented with a list of different behaviors that describe ways in which a woman who is interested in a taken guy could attract, pursue, and obtain him. Each behavior will be followed by questions. Please remember that your answers are anonymous and confidential, so please respond truthfully.

I. PLEASE IMAGINE THE FOLLOWING SCENARIO:

Imagine that you are interested in particular guy. You talk to him before and after class and you typically study together for exams. Several months into the semester, you find out that he has a girlfriend.

If you were in this situation, would you....

1. act sexy around the guy?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Not At All		Maybe		Probably		Definitely
2. get his friends to like you?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Not At All		Maybe		Probably		Definitely
3. try to improve your appearance for him?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Not At All		Maybe		Probably		Definitely
4. compare yourself to his current girlfriend?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Not At All		Maybe		Probably		Definitely
5. put down the appearance of his current girlfriend?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Not At All		Maybe		Probably		Definitely

If you have been in this situation, have you ever.....

1. acted sexy around a guy who you knew was in a relationship?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Never	Rarely	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost Always	Always
2. tried to improve your appearance for a guy who you knew was in a relationship?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Never	Rarely	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost Always	Always
3. got the guy's friends to like you?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Never	Rarely	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost Always	Always

4. compared yourself to the guy's current girlfriend?
- | | | | | | | |
|-------|--------|--------|-----------|------------|---------------|--------|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Never | Rarely | Seldom | Sometimes | Frequently | Almost Always | Always |
5. put down the appearance of the guy's girlfriend?
- | | | | | | | |
|-------|--------|--------|-----------|------------|---------------|--------|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Never | Rarely | Seldom | Sometimes | Frequently | Almost Always | Always |

Please read each of the following scenarios about relationships and answer each question based on your experiences.

Almost every Thursday night, Stephanie and a few of her girlfriends meet out for dinner and drinks. She has been attracted to the bartender- who also works almost every Thursday night at this bar. She finally decided to approach the bartender, Chris. She asks for his number but he refuses to give it to her because he said that he is in a relationship. For the remainder of the night, Stephanie has a good time with her girlfriends but is disappointed about Chris being in a relationship. She can't stop thinking about him- his body, smile, good looks, and charm. Near the end of the night, Stephanie ordered a drink from Chris and sat at the bar to try and get his attention. She continued to be flirtatious- smiling and laughing with him- until she finally asked to buy him a drink when he got off of work.

1. How often do you think girls act like Stephanie?
- | | | | | | | |
|-------|--------|--------|-----------|------------|---------------|--------|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Never | Rarely | Seldom | Sometimes | Frequently | Almost Always | Always |
2. How appropriate is Stephanie's behavior?
- | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|------------------------|---------|----------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Very Inappropriate | Quite Inappropriate | Somewhat Inappropriate | Neutral | Somewhat Appropriate | Quite Appropriate | Very Appropriate |

Rebecca and Stephen have been in a relationship for 1 year. Stephen, easygoing as he is, is approached by a girl at the mall one day when he is shopping and they engage in some casual conversation. She tells him that her name is Carly and she offers him her phone number. Stephen tells her that he is in a committed relationship but would like to talk to her as a friend. A few nights later, Carly randomly sees Stephen out with his friends having a few drinks, without his girlfriend. Carly initiates a conversation and begins to flirt with Stephen. Carly feels like there is a "spark" between them and insists that they should see each other again.

1. How often do you think girls act like Carly?
- | | | | | | | |
|-------|--------|--------|-----------|------------|---------------|--------|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Never | Rarely | Seldom | Sometimes | Frequently | Almost Always | Always |
2. How appropriate is Carly's behavior?
- | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|------------------------|---------|----------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Very Inappropriate | Quite Inappropriate | Somewhat Inappropriate | Neutral | Somewhat Appropriate | Quite Appropriate | Very Appropriate |

John and Heather have been in a relationship for 4 and a half months. Both John and Heather plan to stay monogamous. John goes to the gym on a regular basis and has recently noticed that this one girl always smiles at him. John doesn't think too much about it until one day this girl approaches him and introduces herself as Veronica. For the next few weeks they talk for a little while at the gym and find out that they have quite a few things in common. One day while they are talking at the gym, John lets Veronica know that he has a girlfriend so that Veronica does not get the wrong impression. Although John has a girlfriend, Veronica still wanted to hang out with him at the gym- John did not see anything wrong with this. A few days later, Veronica finished up her workout at the same time with John and they walked out to the parking lot together. Veronica asked John if he wanted to come over for dinner and to have a few drinks- but John had already made dinner plans. Instead, Veronica gave him her phone number and asked him to call her sometime.

1. How often do you think girls act like Veronica?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Never	Rarely	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost Always	Always

2. How appropriate is Veronica's behavior?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Very Inappropriate	Quite Inappropriate	Somewhat Inappropriate	Neutral	Somewhat Appropriate	Quite Appropriate	Very Appropriate

APPENDIX J

Mate Poaching Survey

1. Are there circumstances in which you think pursuing a taken man is justified?
2. If you had to be one or the other, who would you rather be?
The Mistress or The Wife who gets cheated on
3. Have you ever pursued a guy who is in a relationship?
4. Consider if you have pursued a committed guy or if you would pursue a committed guy.
And explain why his commitment to another girl did not/would not get in the way?
5. What, if anything, do you find appealing about a guy's taken status?
6. Would you be less likely to fool around with a friend's guy than a stranger's?
7. Have any of your girlfriends ever gotten involved with a taken guy?
If yes, do you respect her less for it?

APPENDIX K

Characteristics Description

We all have certain characteristics and qualities about ourselves that best define who we are. For example, for some people their passion and success in a career is what best defines him/her, while other people may consider their outgoing personality and warm heart to define them. Please take a few moments to think about these characteristics and qualities. Then, use these characteristics and qualities to describe yourself below.

Appearance Description-

We all have certain parts of our body or physical appearance that we would use to describe ourselves to other people. For example, Sarah describes herself as short, muscular, big brown eyes, long dark hair, freckles, square face, ears pierced, small hands, wide shoulders, and a beautiful smile. Please take a few minutes to think about parts of your body or physical appearance that would best describe you and then, list them below.

APPENDIX L

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

- | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|---------|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. | On the whole, I am satisfied with myself. | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 2. | At times, I think I am no good at all. | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 3. | I feel that I have a number of good qualities. | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 4. | I am able to do things as well as most other people. | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 5. | I feel I do not have much to be proud of. | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 6. | I certainly feel useless at times. | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 7. | I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others. | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 8. | I wish I could have more respect for myself. | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 9. | All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure. | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 10. | I take a positive attitude toward myself. | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree
Quite a bit | Somewhat
Disagree | Neither | Somewhat
Agree | Agree
Quite a bit | Strongly
Agree |

APPENDIX M

Contingencies of Self-Worth Scale

1. My self-esteem does not depend on whether or not I feel attractive.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

2. My self-esteem is influenced by how attractive I think my face or facial features are.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

3. My sense of self-worth suffers whenever I think I don't look good

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

4. My self-esteem is unrelated to how I feel about the way my body looks.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

5. When I think I look attractive, I feel good about myself.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Quite a bit	Somewhat Disagree	Neither	Somewhat Agree	Agree Quite a bit	Strongly Agree

APPENDIX N

State Self-Esteem Scale for Appearance

This is a questionnaire designed to measure what you are thinking at this moment. There is, of course, no right answer for any statement. The best answer is what you feel is true of yourself at this moment. Be sure to answer all of the items, even if you are not certain of the best answer. Again, answer these questions as they are true for you ***right now***.

1. I feel satisfied with the way I look right now.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Not		Maybe		Probably		Definitely
At All						
2. I feel that others respect and admire my looks and body.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Not		Maybe		Probably		Definitely
At All						
3. I am dissatisfied with my appearance.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Not		Maybe		Probably		Definitely
At All						
4. I feel good about myself and the way I look.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Not		Maybe		Probably		Definitely
At All						
5. I am pleased with my appearance right now.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Not		Maybe		Probably		Definitely
At All						
6. I feel unattractive.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Not		Maybe		Probably		Definitely
At All						

APPENDIX O

Directions: While viewing the target photograph and description, we would like you to form an impression of the person based on what you read and saw.

Below are a number of statements. Please rate the extent to which the following statements explain your feelings of the target person.

1. How physically attractive is this person?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very unattractive	quite unattractive	somewhat unattractive	neutral	somewhat attractive	quite attractive	very attractive

2. How appealing is this person?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very appealing	quite appealing	somewhat appealing	neutral	somewhat appealing	quite appealing	very appealing

3. How likely would you would show interest (i.e., make eye contact, smile) in this person?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very unlikely	quite unlikely	somewhat unlikely	neutral	somewhat likely	quite likely	very likely

4. How compatible are you and this person?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very incompatible	quite incompatible	somewhat incompatible	neutral	somewhat compatible	quite compatible	very compatible

5. How likely would you initiate a relationship with this person?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very unlikely	quite unlikely	somewhat unlikely	neutral	somewhat likely	quite likely	very likely

6. How likely would you initiate a conversation with this person?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very unlikely	quite unlikely	somewhat unlikely	neutral	somewhat likely	quite likely	very likely

7. How direct would you be in initiating a romantic relationship with this person?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very indirect	quite indirect	somewhat indirect	neutral	somewhat direct	quite direct	very direct

8. Typically, how successful are you at initiating romantic relationships?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very unsuccessful	quite unsuccessful	somewhat unsuccessful	neutral	somewhat successful	quite successful	very successful

9. In general, how likely are you to pursue individuals of the opposite sex?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very unlikely	quite unlikely	somewhat unlikely	neutral	somewhat likely	quite likely	very likely

10. How confident would you be in initiating a conversation with this person?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very	quite	somewhat	neutral	somewhat	quite	very
unconfident	unconfident	unconfident		confident	confident	confident

APPENDIX P

Willingness to Pursue-Short-Term

Directions: We would like you to form an impression of your match based on what you read and saw.

Below are a number of statements. Please rate the extent to which the following statements explain your feelings of your match, specifically respond as if this dating service and match were real.

1. Initially, how physically attractive did you find your match?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very unattractive	quite unattractive	somewhat unattractive	neutral	somewhat attractive	quite attractive	very attractive

2. Describe your initial feelings and reaction to your match.

3. How sexually appealing is this person?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very appealing	quite appealing	somewhat appealing	neutral	somewhat appealing	quite appealing	very appealing

4. How successful do you think you would be at initiating a short-term or sexual relationship with this person?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very unsuccessful	quite unsuccessful	somewhat unsuccessful	neutral	somewhat successful	quite successful	very successful

5. How likely would you initiate a short-term sexual relationship with this person?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very unlikely	quite unlikely	somewhat unlikely	neutral	somewhat likely	quite likely	very likely

6. How likely would your purpose of initiating a conversation with this person be to have a short-term sexual relationship with him?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very unlikely	quite unlikely	somewhat unlikely	neutral	somewhat likely	quite likely	very likely

7. How compatible do you think you and your match would be in a short-term sexual relationship?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very incompatible	quite incompatible	somewhat incompatible	neutral	somewhat compatible	quite compatibl	very compatible

8. Typically, how successful are you at initiating a short-term or sexual relationship with individuals of the opposite sex?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very unsuccessful	quite unsuccessful	somewhat unsuccessful	neutral	somewhat successful	quite successful	very successful

14. In general, how likely would you pursue this person?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very unlikely	quite unlikely	somewhat unlikely	neutral	somewhat likely	quite likely	very likely

APPENDIX Q

Willingness to Pursue-Long-Term

1. How compatible do you think you and your match would be in a long-term exclusive relationship?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very incompatible	quite incompatible	somewhat incompatible	neutral	somewhat compatible	quite compatible	very compatible
2. How physically attractive did you find your match after you learned more about him in his description (after you read his description)?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very unattractive	quite unattractive	somewhat unattractive	neutral	somewhat attractive	quite attractive	very attractive
3. To what extent does this person appeal to you as being a good long-term partner?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very unattractive	quite unattractive	somewhat unattractive	neutral	somewhat attractive	quite attractive	very attractive
4. How likely would you would show interest (i.e., make eye contact, smile) in this person in hopes of beginning/developing a new exclusive relationship?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very unlikely	quite unlikely	somewhat unlikely	neutral	somewhat likely	quite likely	very likely
5. How direct would you be in initiating a long-term romantic relationship with this person?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very indirect	quite indirect	somewhat indirect	neutral	somewhat direct	quite direct	very direct
6. How confident would you be in initiating a relationship with this person?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very unconfident	quite unconfident	somewhat unconfident	neutral	somewhat confident	quite confident	very confident
7. How successful do you think you would be at initiating a relationship with this person that develops into an exclusive relationship?

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
very unsuccessful	quite unsuccessful	somewhat unsuccessful	neutral	somewhat successful	quite successful	very successful

Table 1

*Frequencies and **Means** (standard deviations) for Participants' Media Exposure*

	Never	Rarely	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost Always	Always	
<i>One Tree Hill</i>	109	18	9	14	8	4	18	2.32 (2.04)
<i>Gossip Girl</i>	114	14	7	12	7	5	21	2.35 (2.14)
<i>Grey's Anatomy</i>	66	17	16	15	17	13	36	3.46 (2.39)
<i>US Weekly</i>	60	45	15	31	19	6	4	2.66 (1.65)
<i>The Hills</i>	86	15	19	21	13	9	17	2.75 (2.08)

Table 2

***Means** (standard deviations) for Participants' Attitude Surveys*

RASE	4.21 (.96)
Hypercompetitiveness	3.86 (.70)
Relationship Contingency	3.80 (1.10)
Entitlement Attitudes Scale	3.90 (.57)
Relational Aggression	2.57 (1.57)
Sexual Attitudes Scale	3.56 (.84)

Table 3

*Frequencies and **Means** (standard deviations) for Participants' "Would You" Mate Poaching Tactics*

	Not at all	Maybe	Probably	Definitely	
Act sexy around guy	95	61	21	3	1.62 (.76)
Get his friends to like you	45	75	46	14	2.16 (.89)
Improve appearance	53	68	45	14	2.11 (.92)
Compare to current girlfriend	39	45	65	31	2.49 (1.02)
Put down girlfriend's appearance	101	44	30	5	1.66 (.85)

Table 4

*Frequencies and **Means** (standard deviations) for Participants' "Have You" Mate Poaching Tactics*

	Never	Rarely	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost Always	Always	
Acted sexy around guy	74	34	17	41	11	3	0	2.39 (1.45)
Got his friends to like you	56	24	22	48	18	5	7	2.95 (1.72)
Improved appearance	60	29	27	34	18	10	2	2.77 (1.65)
Compared to current girlfriend	51	20	16	43	24	14	12	3.33 (1.93)
Put down girlfriend's appearance	93	30	11	30	6	9	1	2.21 (1.57)

Table 5

*Frequencies and **Means** (standard deviations) for Participants' Attitudes of Frequency & Appropriateness of Other Women's Mate Poaching Tactics*

	Never/ Extremely Inappropriate	Rarely/ Quite Inappropriate	Seldom/ Somewhat Inappropriate	Sometimes/ Neither	Frequently/ Somewhat Appropriate	Almost Always/ Quite Appropriate	Always/ Extremely Appropriate	
How often girls Stephanie	3	5	15	39	97	15	6	4.62 (1.07)
How often Carly	2	1	7	48	96	19	7	4.78 (.93)
How often girls Veronica	0	3	13	54	82	23	5	4.69 (.94)
How appropriate is Stephanie's behavior	36	87	42	8	4	1	2	2.27 (1.05)
How appropriate is Carly's behavior	48	61	45	15	7	2	2	2.37 (1.24)
How appropriate is Veronica's behavior?	38	56	51	22	7	6	0	2.57 (1.25)

Table 6

Frequencies and Means (standard deviations) for Participants' Relationship Behaviors

	Strongly disagree	Disagree quite a bit	Somewhat disagree	Neither	Somewhat agree	Agree quite a bit	Strongly agree	
Okay to be attracted to taken guy	27	25	22	11	54	18	22	4.02 (1.97)
Okay to flirt with friend's boyfriend	91	47	14	11	14	0	2	1.98 (1.35)
Okay to kiss guy before know relationship status	57	37	27	15	33	7	3	2.79 (1.70)
Important to be in relationship	3	28	30	34	40	29	15	4.27 (1.59)
Talk to friends about crushes/hookups/relationships	1	7	38	0	60	48	25	5.24 (1.09)
Cheated On or not?	Yes (n = 107)	No (n = 72)						
Dating status	Single (n = 78)	Committed (n = 96)						

Table 7

Intercorrelations for Willingness to Pursue-Original, Willingness to Pursue-Short-Term, and Willingness to Pursue-Long-Term

	WPQ-O	WPQ-S	WPQ-L
WPQ-O	1	.63**	.81**
WPQ-S		1	.63**
WPQ-L			1

Note. ** = $p < .001$

Table 8

Means (standard deviations) of Appearance Contingent Participants on WPQ-O

Dating Status	Single		In a Relationship	
Match Status	Single	Attached	Single	Attached
No Threat	.70 (.81) <i>n</i> = 6	1.01 (1.15) <i>n</i> = 11	1.36 (.41) <i>n</i> = 8	1.21 (.56) <i>n</i> = 8
Threat	.04 (1.19) <i>n</i> = 16	.06 (1.11) <i>n</i> = 13	-.10 (.93) <i>n</i> = 8	-.32 (.80) <i>n</i> = 6

Table 8

Means (standard deviations) of Appearance Noncontingent Participants on WPQ-O

Dating Status	Single		In a Relationship	
Match Status	Single	Attached	Single	Attached
No Threat	.57 (.78) <i>n</i> = 6	.91 (.80) <i>n</i> = 7	.50 (.73) <i>n</i> = 4	.40 (.94) <i>n</i> = 5
Threat	.06 (1.29) <i>n</i> = 7	-.45 (.64) <i>n</i> = 2	.50 (.75) <i>n</i> = 6	.08 (.59) <i>n</i> = 12

Table 9

Means (standard deviations) of Appearance Contingent Participants on WPQ-L

Dating Status	Single		In a Relationship	
<i>Match Status</i>	<i>Single</i>	<i>Attached</i>	<i>Single</i>	<i>Attached</i>
No Threat	-.28 (1.28) <i>n</i> = 6	.30 (1.50) <i>n</i> = 11	.92 (.60) <i>n</i> = 8	.85 (1.00) <i>n</i> = 8
Threat	-.74 (1.42) <i>n</i> = 16	-.73 (1.37) <i>n</i> = 13	-1.40 (.98) <i>n</i> = 8	-1.72 (1.16) <i>n</i> = 6

Table 9

Means (standard deviations) of Appearance Noncontingent Participants on WPQ-L

Dating Status	Single		In a Relationship	
<i>Match Status</i>	<i>Single</i>	<i>Attached</i>	<i>Single</i>	<i>Attached</i>
No Threat	-.53 (1.34) <i>n</i> = 6	.75 (1.35) <i>n</i> = 6	-.50(.87) <i>n</i> = 4	-.80 (1.19) <i>n</i> = 5
Threat	-.57 (1.80) <i>n</i> = 7	-.33 (.33) <i>n</i> = 3	-.17 (.75) <i>n</i> = 6	-1.08 (.85) <i>n</i> = 12

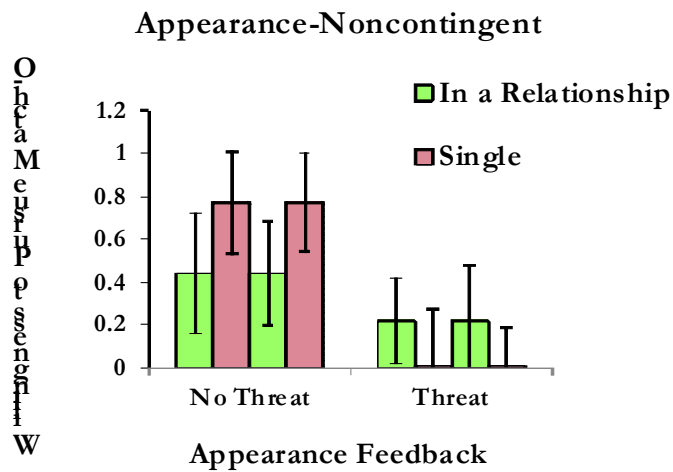


Figure 1. Mean scores representing appearance-contingent women's overall willingness to pursue the match. Standard errors are represented in the figure by the error bars attached to each column.

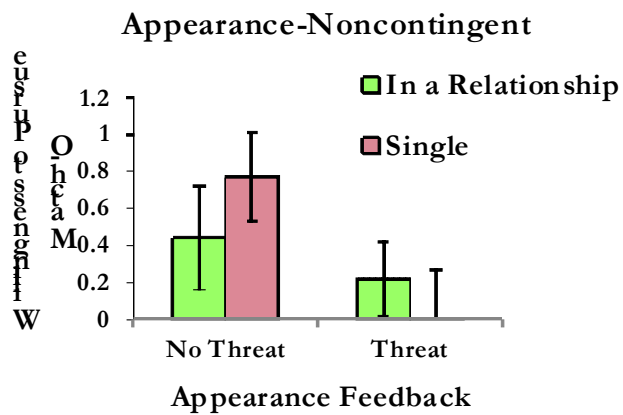


Figure 1. Mean scores representing appearance-contingent women's overall willingness to pursue the match. Standard errors are represented in the figure by the error bars attached to each column.

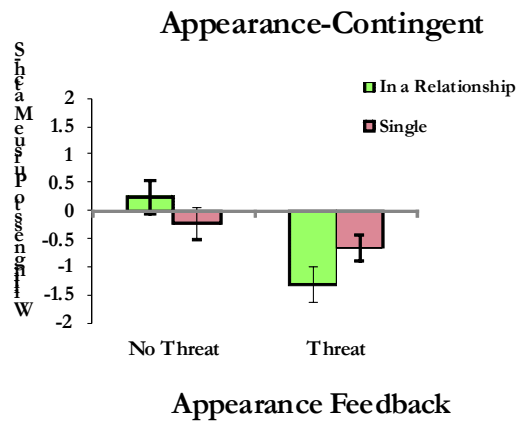


Figure 2. Mean scores representing appearance-contingent women's willingness to pursue the match for a short-term sexual relationship. Standard errors are represented in the figure by the error bars attached to each column.

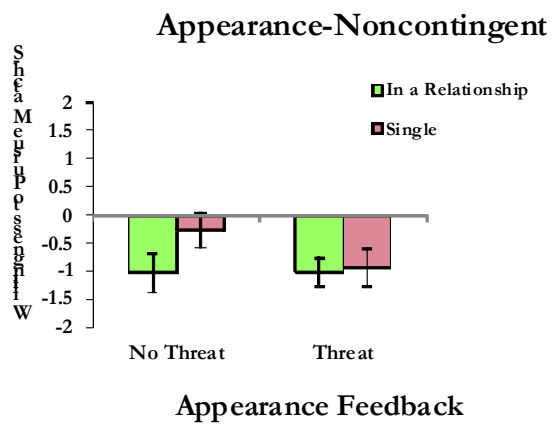


Figure 2. Mean scores representing appearance-contingent women's willingness to pursue the match for a short-term sexual relationship. Standard errors are represented in the figure by the error bars attached to each column.

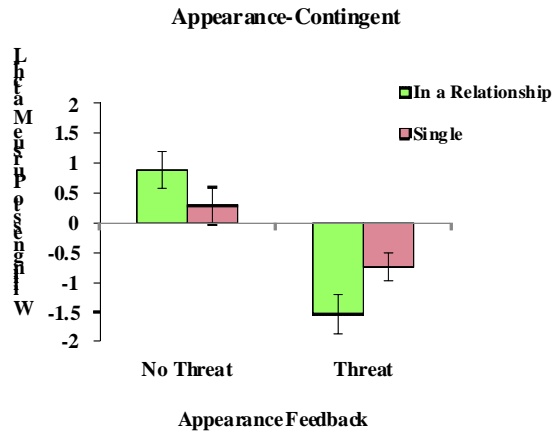


Figure 3. Mean scores representing appearance-contingent women's willingness to pursue the match for a long-term exclusive relationship. Standard errors are represented in the figure by the error bars attached to each column.

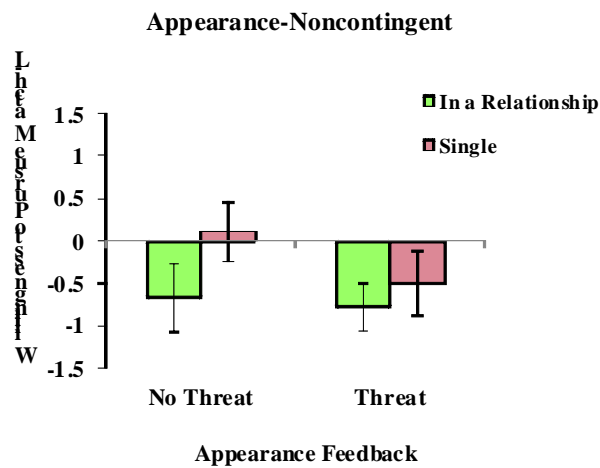


Figure 3. Mean scores representing appearance-noncontingent women's willingness to pursue the match for a long-term exclusive relationship. Standard errors are represented in the figure by the error bars attached to each column.

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date: Wednesday, April 08, 2009
IRB Application No AS0923
Proposal Title: Attraction and Dating

Reviewed and Expedited
Processed as:

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved Protocol Expires: 4/7/2010

Principal
Investigator(s):

Jessica S Parker
215 North Murray
Stillwater, OK 74078

Melissa Burkley
116 North Murray
Stillwater, OK 74078

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

☒ The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research, and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Beth McTernan in 219 Cordell North (phone: 405-744-5700, beth.mcternan@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,



Sheila Kennison, Chair
Institutional Review Board

VITA

Jessica Suzanne Parker

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Thesis: MATE POACHING: WHO IS MOST LIKELY TO POACH AND WHY?

Major Field: Psychology

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Wachapreague, Virginia. Parents are Susie & Sam Parker. Brother and family are Abel and Angie Parker, Lydia Parker, & Ava Parker. Engaged to be married to Mark Myers.

Education: Graduated from Broadwater Academy, Nassawadox, VA in May, 2002. Received Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology from Christopher Newport University, Newport News, VA in May, 2006. Received Master of Science degree in Psychology at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May, 2008.

Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May, 2010.

Experience: Research coordinator for Cognitive Development lab at Christopher Newport University. Research coordinator for Social Cognitive lab at Oklahoma State University, 2007 to present. Research Assistant for LAB at Oklahoma State University, Human Development and Family Sciences Department. Data Manager & Statistical Analyst for Engineering Department, Oklahoma State University, 2008 to present. Data Manager for Human Environmental Sciences Department, Oklahoma State University, 2009 to present.

Professional Memberships: Sigma Xi, Society for Personality and Social Psychology

Name: Jessica Parker

Date of Degree: May, 2010

Institution: Oklahoma State University

Location: Stillwater, Oklahoma

Title of Study: MATE POACHING: WHO IS MOST LIKELY TO POACH AND WHY?

Pages in Study: 93

Candidate for the Degree of Doctorate of Philosophy

Major Field: Psychology

Scope and Method of Study: The purpose of these two studies was to determine *who* is more likely to mate poach and *why*. Study 1 was designed to identify what types of women are more likely to engage in mate poaching. It was predicted that women who possess negative relational attitudes would be more likely to engage in mate poaching behaviors. A second study was designed to investigate potential motives for mate poaching—self-esteem, appearance threats, and competition. Specifically, it was predicted that in an attempt to restore self-esteem, appearance-contingent women would be more likely to mate poach following a threat to their appearance self-esteem. Combined, these studies offer insight into the behavior of mate poaching.

Findings and Conclusions: These two studies are unique because they offer novel insight into the motives and behaviors of the female mate poacher. In Study 1, I explored the question of who is most likely to mate poach by identifying a profile of a female mate poacher. Results suggest that she is most likely to be a single woman, who bases self-worth on having romantic relationships, and who would rather be "the mistress" as compared to "the wife being cheated on." She also possesses permissive sexual attitudes and other negative, relational attitudes. Furthermore, she is the woman who frequently engages in negative relational behaviors, and who believes there is nothing wrong with engaging in mate poaching tactics. These results are the first to provide such a detailed description of a female mate poacher.

Study 2 attempted to explain an underlying mechanism for female mate poaching behaviors. It was predicted that an appearance threat would differentially affect appearance-contingent and appearance-noncontingent women's willingness to pursue an attached guy. Although my overall hypotheses were not supported, I argue that appearance contingency of self-worth and appearance threats may still be important underlying factors in female mate poaching, but issues with the study's prescreening and appearance threat procedures led to the lack of significant findings.

ADVISER'S APPROVAL: Dr. Melissa Burkley